

Recycled Reef - Artist Statement – Robert Rossiello

Every year, 8 million metric tons of plastic end up in our oceans. That amount is equivalent to five grocery bags filled with plastic for every foot of coastline in the world. In 2025, the amount of trash in the ocean is estimated to double - to 10 bags full of plastic per foot of coastline.

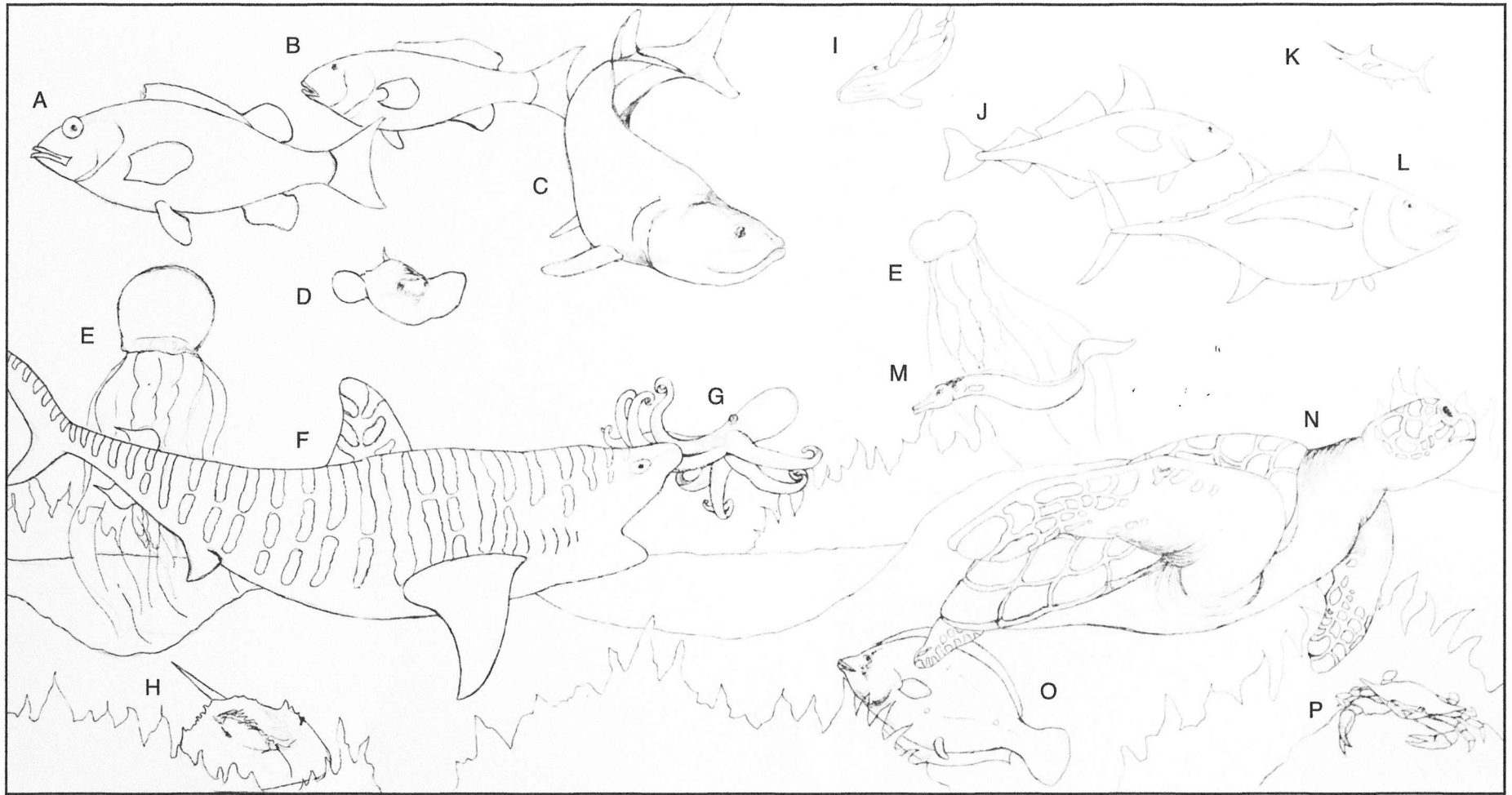
This man-made problem has a devastating effect on our eco-system and marine life. In addition to killing birds and fish, millions of plastic bags degrade into micro-plastics and are eaten by fish, which then works its way up the food chain to humans.

I created the Recycled Reef Mural to bring awareness of this problem and to stress the importance of recycling. Working with Atlantic City's Special Improvement District, I had several bags of recycled material that SID collected delivered to my studio, where I washed and processed it to turn into art. Cans, bottles, plastic cups, and other trash has been integrated into the painting, creating patterns that mesh and sometimes clash with the underlying design.

With the Atlantic Ocean right at our door, I chose to include sea creatures that are native to the Eastern seaboard. I show the great diversity of ocean life nearby, and also show how this vital and precious resource has become threatened by pollution. Although the mural has an underlying message, I also wanted to celebrate the wonders of the ocean and how we, with a little foresight and discipline, can work in harmony with nature.

Robert Rossiello is an artist who lives and works in Ventnor, New Jersey. He is a magazine Art Director and a graphic designer. For eight years he oversaw the design and editing of Casino Connection magazine for the Atlantic City casino industry, and continues to maintain the magazine on the web.

Working primarily in photography, Robert's work has appeared in several publications, including Global Gaming Business, Casino Design and the Wall Street Journal. In December 2017, he participated in Atlantic City Art Foundation's ARTeriors show at the Tanger Outlets, creating a mixed-media piece. He also designed the map for the 2018 48 Blocks AC festival.



Scientists have identified approximately 230,000 marine species worldwide, ranging from seaweeds to blue whales, and estimated that between 500,000 and 2 million more multi-celled marine organisms are still unknown.

Many species are likely to go extinct—due to pollution, climate change and acidification—before they are even found.

The drawing above depicts sealife that is native to the Atlantic Ocean. Can you match the name of these creatures to the choices at right?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tiger Shark | <input type="checkbox"/> Stingray | <input type="checkbox"/> Acadian Redfish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tarpon | <input type="checkbox"/> Fluke | <input type="checkbox"/> Haddock |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jellyfish | <input type="checkbox"/> Albicore Tuna | <input type="checkbox"/> Grouper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Horseshoe Crab | <input type="checkbox"/> Sea Turtle | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Marlin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Eel | <input type="checkbox"/> Octopus | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Whale | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Claw Crab | |

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| F Tiger Shark | O Fluke |
| E Jellyfish | I Blue Whale |
| M Sea Turtle | J Haddock |
| N American Eel | A Acadian Redfish |
| C Tiger Shark | P Blue Claw Crab |
| L Albicore Tuna | M Sea Turtle |
| | G Octopus |
| | H Horseshoe Crab |
| | D Stingray |
| | K Blue Marlin |

Test Your Ocean Knowledge

1. The blue whale is the largest animal ever to inhabit the earth. They can grow up to 100 feet, about the size of two city buses. A blue whale's tongue alone can weigh as much as an elephant. How many people can fit into the mouth of the average blue whale?

- A. 50
- B. 80
- C. 100

2. How many eyes does a hermit crab have?

- A. 8
- B. 10
- C. 2

3. What color is a hermit crabs blood?

- A. Blue
- B. Red
- C. Green

4. What is the average amount of time a plastic bag is used before being discarded?

- A. 5 days
- B. 1 hour
- C. 15 minutes

5. What of the following fish is NOT native to the Atlantic Ocean?

- A. Tuna
- B. Haddock
- C. Pollack
- D. Salmon
- E. Cod

6. What percent of the Earth's surface is covered by water?

- A. 70%
- B. 50%
- C. 40%

7. How many pounds of waste is found in the ocean per year?

- A. 17 million
- B. 2 billion
- C. 14 billion

8. Up to how many eggs do sea turtles lay at once?

- A. 110
- B. 80
- C. 60

4. C
3. A
2. B
1. C
8. A
7. C
6. A
5. D